SPECIAL TENTH-ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!
DARK HORSE COMICS
$3.99
#32
THE GOON
by Eric Powell
Eric Powell '08
10
DIRECT SALES
03211
32 PAGES OF STORY PLUS MIKE MIGNOLA, JEFF SMITH, KEVIN NOWLAN, AND MORE!

ONCE THERE WERE TWO DOWN-ON-THEIR-LUCK DRIFTERS.
AS ONE OF THE DRIFTERS BECAME TIRED FROM THE LONG DAY OF TRAVELING, HE SUGGESTED THE TWO FIND A COMFORTABLE SPOT TO SLEEP. THEY LOOKED FOR A PLACE TO BED DOWN, AND NOTICED A HOMELY LITTLE GIRL BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.
SHE SAID THAT SHE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO KEEP UP WITH HER PEOPLE BECAUSE HER SMALL, FRAIL LEGS MADE HER TOO SLOW. SHE ASKED THEM TO SIT WITH HER FOR A WHILE SO SHE WOULD NOT BE SO ALONE.
FOR THEIR COMPANY, SHE OFFERED TO GIVE THEM HER ONLY FOOD--A MEAGER LOAF OF BREAD.

THE SLEEPY DRIFTER, ALTHOUGH STARVING, SAW THAT THE SKINNY CHILD COULD USE THE MEAL MUCH MORE THAN HE. HE KINDLY REFUSED HER OFFER.
THE OTHER MAN SNATCHED THE LOAF FROM HER HANDS AND GREEDILY SCARFED IT DOWN WITH NO REMORSE.
THE SMALL GIRL CHUCKLED, AND THEN THE TWO MEN SAW THAT SHE WAS NOT A CHILD, BUT A WITHERED OLD WOMAN.
SHE LOOKED TO THE KINDLY MAN AND SAID TO HIM--
YOU WILL BE CONTENT ALL YOUR REMAINING DAYS. AND AT THE END, YOU WILL DIE IN YOUR BED NEXT TO THE ONE WHO LOVES YOU MOST.
THEN SHE TURNED TO THE GREEDY MAN AND SAID TO HIM--
YOU WILL WANT FOREVER. YOU WILL ALWAYS BE HUNGRY AND WILL NEVER HAVE ENOUGH. YOU WILL LIVE A VERY, VERY LONG TIME AND CHILDREN WILL HATE YOU.

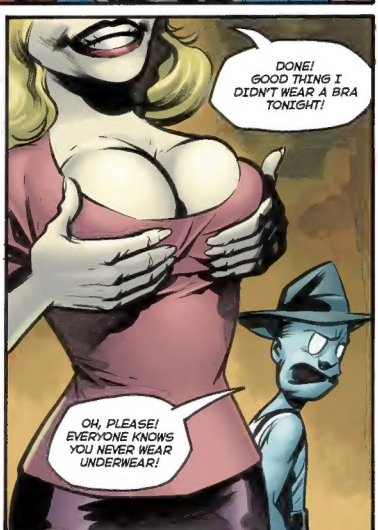
AND THEN SHE WAS GONE, AND WHAT SHE SAID CAME TRUE.
POOR MASTER. HE HAS BEEN MISTREATED AND TORTURED AND LEFT WITH NOTHING.
CAT?
YES, MASTER?
IS YOUR LOYALTY STEADFAST?
EVEN WHEN HE BECOMES A BLIND, SMELLY VAGRANT THAT PEOPLE KICK AT AND SPIT AT. CAT WILL ALWAYS BE WITH HIM. YES, CAT WOULD NEVER LEAVE HIS MASTER.
WOULD YOU SACRIFICE FOR YOUR MASTER?
ALL THAT IS CAT IS YOURS, MASTER.

GOOD. BECAUSE IT MUST BE GIVEN FREELY.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY GOON!
OKAY, YOU DRUNKEN MISCREANTS, IT'S THE GOON'S BIRTHDAY AND WE'RE GONNA MAKE IT A GOOD ONE, SEE! HE'S BEEN DOWN LATELY, AND THE FELLA COULD USE A GOOD TIME.

THAT MEANS NO MENTIONING YOUR MOTHER'S HYSTERECTOMY, CARL.

AND, ANDY, JUST... JUST DON'T BE YOU.
YOU SUCK AT LIFE.

AND, MABEL, IT WOULDN'T HURT IF YOU LET A NIPPLE SLIP OUT. ACCIDENTAL LIKE. IT AIN'T A BIRTHDAY IF A MAN DON'T GET TO SEE A STRANGE BOOBY.
WHAT KINDA GAL DO YOU THINK I AM?!
DRINKS ARE ON ME.


DONE! GOOD THING I DIDN'T WEAR A BRA TONIGHT!
OH, PLEASE! EVERYONE KNOWS YOU NEVER WEAR UNDERWEAR!

GET READY, EVERYBODY! HERE HE COMES!
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

N!
WHISKEY.

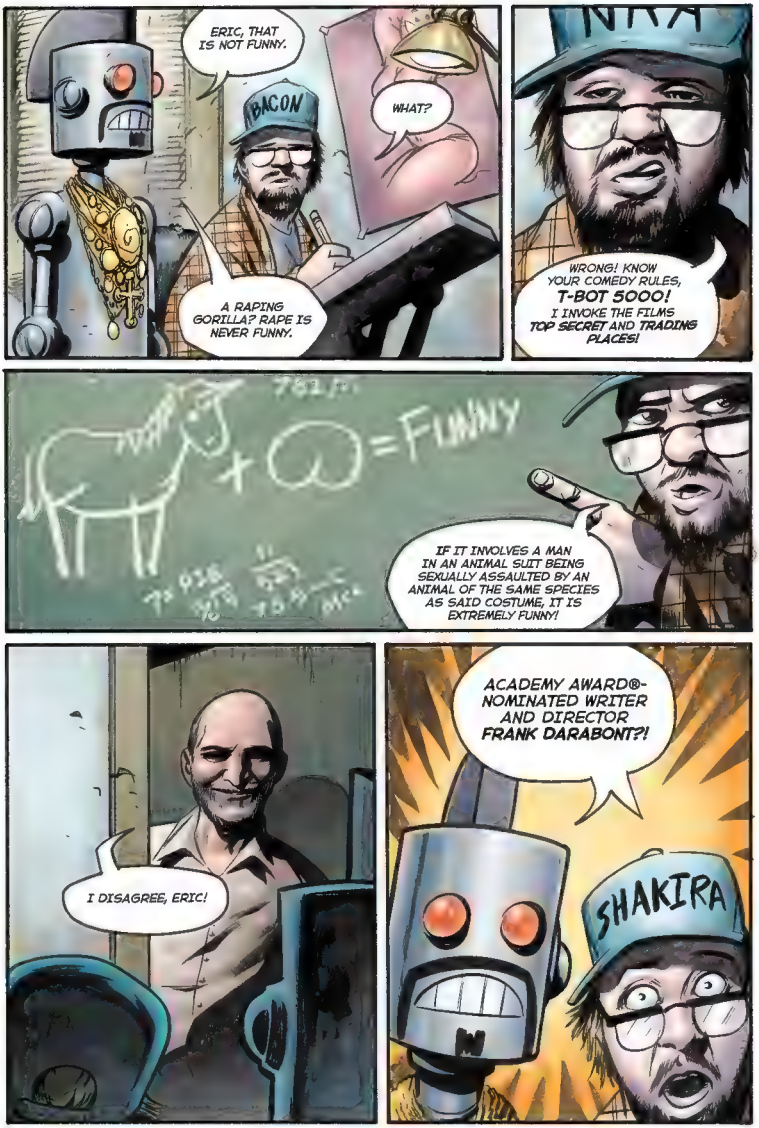
HEY, GOON! LOOK, IT'S YOUR FAVORITE! CAKE AND MILWAUKEE BEER!
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN COMPLETELY INDIFFERENT? ALIVE. DEAD. YOU JUST DON'T CARE?
IT AIN'T WORKIN! MABEL, QUICK--POP ONE OUT!
I AIN'T DRUNK YET! IT MAKES IT LESS LADYLIKE!
HEY, BOSS, WE GOT YA A PRESENT!
YEAH, IT'S A NEW HAT!

HEY! I WANTED TO GIVE IT TO HIM!
NO! I'M GIVIN' IT TO HIM!
BUT I WAS THE ONE THAT GOT SHOT!
IT WERE DANG CHEAP, TOO, SINCE WE JUST GOT YER OLD HAT OUTTA THE GUTTER AND WARSHED IT UP!
SHUT UP, YOU STUPID DOG!
YOU RUIN EVERYTHING!

GOON, WHERE YA GOIN'?! DON'T LEAVE YET! MABEL WAS GONNA SHOW YOU HER BOOBS!
WHEN I WAS DRUNK!
YOU MUGS THINKIN' WHAT I'M THINKIN'?
TELEGRAM FOR THE GOON!
I'LL TAKE THAT.
HMM? WHAT'S THIS?
YOU HAVE RECEIVED A SINGING BIRTHDAY TELEGRAM FROM... THE RAPE GORILLA??

GAHHH!
HEY! LEAVE MY PANTS ALONE, YOU!

DEAR GOD. WHERE WILL THIS ALL LEAD?
IN THE YEAR 2525, IF MAN IS STILL ALIVE!
THE DIVINE SPARK LIES ONLY IN THE SIMIAN BRAIN!
SO SAYS YOU, YOU DAMN DIRTY APE!
GAG THE ANIMAL!!
IT'S A MAD HOUSE! A MAD HOU--GAHGAH!!


ERIC, THAT IS NOT FUNNY.
BACON
WHAT?
A RAPING GORILLA? RAPE IS NEVER FUNNY.
NRA
WRONG! KNOW YOUR COMEDY RULES, T-BOT 5000! I INVOKE THE FILMS TOP SECRET AND TRADING PLACES!
+ = FUNNY
IF IT INVOLVES A MAN IN AN ANIMAL SUIT BEING SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY AN ANIMAL OF THE SAME SPECIES AS SAID COSTUME, IT IS EXTREMELY FUNNY!
I DISAGREE, ERIC!
ACADEMY AWARD®-NOMINATED WRITER AND DIRECTOR FRANK DARABONT?!
SHAKIRA

BONER
IF THE MAN IS TIM ROBBINS AND HIS ASSAULT IS BEING NARRATED BY MORGAN FREEMAN, THAT IS EXTREMELY NOT FUNNY.
ANYTHING YOU PUT IN MY MOUTH, YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE!
HONEY, HUSH!
I WISH I COULD TELL YOU ANDY FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT AND THE SISTERS LET HIM BE. I WISH I COULD TELL YOU THAT, BUT PRISON IS NO FAIRY-TALE WORLD.

POINT MADE.
THERE HE IS!
CAKE!
HEY, HOBO, WANT A PIECE OF YUMMY CAKE?

MMMMMM MMMMM-
SPLAT!
HA! HA! NO CAKE FOR YOU, YA SMELLY BUM!
JUST MUD PIE!
UNHOLY BASTARDS! I'LL GET YOUR CAKE! I'LL GET YOUR CAKE IF IT'S THE LAST THING I EVER DO!
RRAUH!
OH, HOBO GOD, RISE UP AND SMITE THE CAKE EATERS!

BED TO BED, SAYS SLEEPY HEAD! WAIT A WHILE, SAYS SLOW! PUT ON THE POT, SAYS GREEDY GUT! WE'LL EAT 'FORE WE GO!

THEY WENT THAT WAY AND THEY HAD CAKE!
NO! NOT ME!

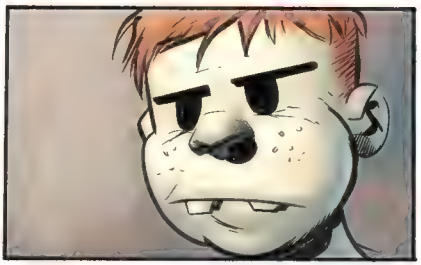
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING, SARAH?
MOMMY?!
COME, LET'S TO BED, SAYS SLEEPY HEAD.
TARRY A WHILE, SAYS SLOW.
AHH!
PUT ON THE POT, SAYS GREEDY GUT, LET'S SUP BEFORE WE GO.

THE
OOOOH. CAKE BAD.
MY SWEAT SMELLS LIKE FROSTING.
CAIN'T I HAVE SOME NOW?
SHUTTUP! CAKE IS BAD FOR DOGS!
Skritch!
WHAT'S THAT?
PROBABLY OLD LADY MCGREG SHARPENING HER BOIL-PIERCING NEEDLE.
IT'S COMING FROM THE WINDOW.

COME, LET'S TO BED, SAYS SLEEPY HEAD.
TARRY A WHILE, SAYS SLOW.
CAN'T RUN! TOO FULL OF CAKE!
SOMETHING IS COMING IN OUR WINDOW! QUICK, GUYS, THROW IT THE DOG! IT MIGHT SLOW IT DOWN ENOUGH FOR US TO MAKE OFF WITH THE CAKE!
GOON! HELP!

HEY, YOU!
YOU PICKED THE WRONG TIME TO GET MY DANDER UP, BUDDY!

OH JEEZ! LAST TIME I SAW SOMETHIN' GET BEAT LIKE THAT WAS WHEN OLD LADY MCGREG FOUND DOG RUMMAGIN' THROUGH THE TRASH!
I WERE HUNGRY.
THAT TRASH CAN WAS FULL OF MCGREG'S ADULT DIAPERS!
I WERE HUNGRY.



HEY! DOG TOOK THE CAKE!
MY CAKE NOW, CHUMPS! I MAY GOT THREE LEGS BUT I STILL CLIMB BETTER THAN YOU!
GET DOWN HERE WITH THAT!
WHY DON'T YOU SUCK MY STUMP?!
FELLAS, I THINK I'M GONNA BE SICK!
SMITTY, I'M VERBALIZIN' A FORMALIZED COMPLAINT AS TO YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS! I GET SHOT AND NOW I GOTTA TAKE SASS FROM A THREE-LEGGED DOG WHAT STOLE MY CAKE?! WHAT KINDA OUTFIT IS THIS?!
YOUR CAKE?!
WATCH YER MOUTH, FOUR EYES!
I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THAT FROM YOU!
OW! THAT'S MY GUNSHOT WOUND!
BLARG!
EEEEEEEEWW!

RAT ALLEY
THERE YA GO, YA HOBO THING. AN ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BUFFET.
IF THEY DON'T EAT YOU FIRST.

TO BED, TO BED,
SAYS GREEDY GUT.

FRANKY!
WHAT HAPPENED TO MY MILWAUKEE BEER?
WHOO!
PUT THEM THINGS AWAY, MABEL. IF I WANTED TO SEE SAGGY SACKS OF BEEF I'D GO TO THE BUTCHER.

HE'LL BRING THE OTHERS WHEN HE COMES BACK...
...BUT THIS TOWN IS MINE!!
HE COMES TO MY HOME AND HUMILIATES ME AGAIN! TAKES MY EYE AND GIVES IT TO LABRAZIO!

THE GOON™

SKETCHBOOK

Sean McNally

Mike Mignola

Kevin Nowlan

Mike Ploog

Jeff Smith

Bernie Wrightson

Believe it or not, this is where the Goon began.

I was trying to come up with something to pitch around to the smaller publishers, since I was having no luck getting anywhere with the big boys (and for good reason—I sucked). I was watching a cartoon where a mouse turned into a Mr. Hyde-type creature. It was your typical cartoon monster, with long arms dragging on the ground and short stumpy legs. I've always loved the big thuggish characters, and the design inspired me. I came up with this idea of a kid monster named Mog—sort of a mix between a rat and a gorilla—living in the real world and going to school with normal kids. It was a really weak idea.

It didn't take long for me to drop that concept and evolve the look of the character a bit. My next scheme was for this guy to be a half-man/half-ogre, banished to Earth to hunt down renegade monsters. A little better of an idea ... but not much. Check out this little sidekick in the suit. I guess if Mog is the prototype for Goon, then he's the prototype for Franky.

In 1994, I met a couple of local guys named Chuck Angel and Larry Underwood, who were self-publishing a horror comic. I approached them about putting a Mog story in one, and I did a short in their book *Best Cellars*. Other than this image, used in a series of trading cards featuring small press comic characters, that was the only time Mog saw print.

Chuck and Larry now have a television show called *Chiller Cinema* that airs late-night Thursdays on UPN in the middle Tennessee area as well as a few select cities across the country.

This pencil page was done when I received several rejection letters from publishers saying I should "pencil or ink … not both." Now that I'm a working professional, I can say with all honesty that it was one of the stupidest things I've ever heard. I've only been able to continue working in this business because of my versatility, allowing me to take any type of work that came my way. Telling an artist that he should train himself in only one medium is moronic.

Here are some bits and pieces from when I switched from inking with a quill pen to a brush. Pretty sloppy. Eight years later and I think I'm finally getting the hang of it.

This was the last drawing I did of Mog before completely abandoning the concept.

I started getting some work-for-hire jobs, but I still wanted to try my own thing. I decided Mog wasn't good enough, but I didn't have anything else in mind. I just knew I still wanted to do something with monsters.

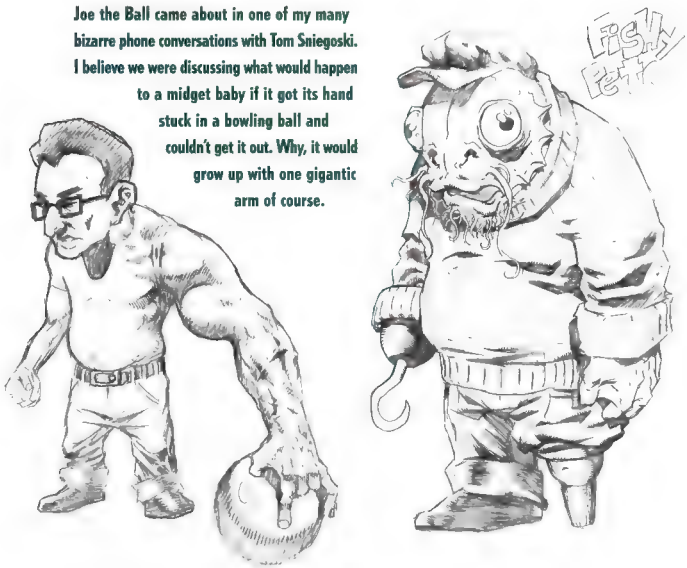
I was trying to come up with a title when the word "Goon" popped into my head. Images of a film-noir world, filled with zombies lurking in shadowy back alleys, started forming in my head. I thought I might have something.

This is the first and only design sketch I needed for the Goon. I wanted to keep the same gorilla build from Mog, but make him really, really ugly. The buck teeth came about for the ugly factor, plus I thought no one else would have the guts to give their main character big goofy buck teeth.

Franky was much harder to nail down. All I knew was that I wanted the Goon to have a little maniacal sidekick. It always came out too crazy looking. I finally came to the peanut head that we all know and love.

The zombie priest was always pictured as a severely anorexic George C. Scott.

Joe the Ball came about in one of my many bizarre phone conversations with Tom Sniegoski. I believe we were discussing what would happen to a midget baby if it got its hand stuck in a bowling ball and couldn't get it out. Why, it would grow up with one gigantic arm of course.



This is the first finished piece I did of the Goon … and all the other characters for that matter.

01-25-09: As I write this I am on a plane heading to France. I'm going over there to do some signings, a gallery show, and to attend the big comic festival they have at Angoulême. AND I'M CARRYING A CASE OF FREEDOM FRIES AND A CAN OF AMERICAN WHOOPASS WITH ME! *WE'LL PUT A BOOT IN YER ASS DOOPY DOOPY DO-WOP!* Oh, wait, scratch that. The new guy just got sworn in a few days ago. What am I supposed to carry over there now?! Understanding, hope, and intelligence? How can I start any international conflicts with that?! Lame. Well, I guess I'll just have to hand every book back that I sign with the comment, "Merry Christmas, Faggot!" and see where that gets me. I'm gonna have to try real hard to make us look bad now that Bush is gone. Let's hope that Obama ends up being a Nazi pedophile or something so we can bask in the world's hatred again without me having to resort to homosexual slurs.

Yeah, this is my second trip to France and I've been thinking a lot about all the things that have happened in between. Really, I've been thinking about the last ten years, since this book was first published. It seems to have been a nonstop chain of craziness since that first issue of *Goon* hit the stands in March of 1999. The roller-coaster ride of creating *The Goon* and getting it published at the time when all of the turbulent stuff in the world around us was going on really made me realize this world is pretty silly. And, dangerously, takes itself way to seriously to be that silly. However, it has also led me to confidently believe I can start a cult. So I got that going for me when the apocalypse comes.

01-26-09: I am back in Paris! My lady rollergirl, Rambo Sambo (that is not a racial slur to go along with the homosexual slur; her name is Sam), and I went to the big church they got. Notre Dame. I, however, did not spot that bunch of Irish football players that live there. I've got horrible jet lag. I don't know how those guys make those games and compete. They must be on the cocaine.

I went to that Louvre museum, too. Here's a priceless piece of art next to a Rembrandt painting.

First on the agenda was a signing at the Paris Virgin Records store. The awesome lady who helped set the signing up in the store said, "It was great to have you in my Virgin!" Ha! Thank you for having me in your Virgin, Marie!

All of the people here were really nice. Kinda makes

me wonder where all the talk about French people hating Americans comes from. Maybe French people just hate Americans who say they hate Americans. Alls I'm sayin' is if they can love this white-trash hillbilly, cain't they can love us all?

Next I had a gallery show at Gallery 9E in Paris. Yes, son of drywall hanger from podunk Tennessee had a solo gallery show in Paris, France. Suck on that, junior-high art teacher who said I was sick and demented! Did you ever have a gallery show in Paris?! NO!

The show did great. These people here love their funny books. This is me and the gallery owner, Bernard. I like him. He made me money.

No, sir, I do not want to film an independent adult film with you. Please stop following me around with that camera and making kissy noises.

01-28-09: Next it was off to Bordeaux. Home of the wine. Wine is good. I don't remember much of Bordeaux.

01-29-08: In Angoulême. France's biggest comics festival. They take their funny books seriously here. They don't have a market aimed towards kids or dominated by superhero books. They have a wide range of subject matter. Little did I expect I would run into fellow southerner and *Fear Agent* artist Tony Moore!

And just when we were feeling homesick . . . we found the U.S. Embassy! To see more images from my Frenchy adventure, visit my blog at www.thegoon.com.

With my deepest sincerity, the last ten years of doing this comic for you have been a blast. Thank you so much for buying, reading, and caring about this silliness that I scribble! Here's to ten more!

—Eric

GOON YEAR!
FINALLY COLLECTED IN THREE VOLUMES!

STARTING JUNE 2009 WITH
A PLACE OF HEARTACHE AND GRIEF

DISCOVER DARK HORSE POWER

MARCH 2009

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST WEBCOMIC? I'M SURE YOU REMEMBER.

Mine was Charley Parker's *Argon Zark!* in the midnineties. It took forever to load on my parents' dial-up connection, but even so I tore through that strip's archive as fast as I could. It blew my mind—*comics! On the Internet!*—and new pages couldn't come fast enough. I was hungry for more, but it seemed that *Argon Zark!* was the only site of its kind. (In actual fact there were six. Remember the years before Google, when we had to walk uphill to the Internet in the snow, both ways?)

Flash forward thirteen years and there's an embarrassment of e-riches. Newspapers may be fading, with their funnies section the long-suffering canary in the mine, but it's become clear that our culture has developed a curious *need* for comic strips. Thewebcomiclist.com currently counts over *twelve thousand* webcomics. Twelve freaking *thousand*.

But where do you start? When you have so many options, how do you know which ones are worth your time?

Well, Dear Reader, we professional nerds at Dark Horse have been scouring the Internets *for* you, seeking out the proverbial *crème de la crème*. After kicking things off with cult hits *Megatokyo* and *Penny Arcade*, we relaunched our flagship anthology *Dark Horse Presents* as a MySpace monthly and made big waves last year with *The Perry Bible Fellowship*, *Achewood*, and *Wondermark*—and all three of which, by the way, will have second volumes out this spring.

"Okay," I hear you thinking, "but what's *new*?"

How about *Star Wars*—that do anything for you? To celebrate ***Star Wars: The Old Republic***, BioWare and LucasArts' hugely anticipated MMORPG (that's "massively multiplayer online role-playing game," for you luddites), we've teamed up with one of the game's writers, **Rob Chestney**, and *BtVS: Tales of the Vampires* alum **Alex Sanchez** to present a biweekly webcomic at **swtor.com**. If you've had a hankering for lightsaber battles and space opera—and really, who hasn't?—fire up your computer and check it out!

"Cool," you think, "a *Star Wars* muh-more-pa-guh. I . . . hey *waitaminute*, *Star Wars* has been around since the '70s! What's *new*-new?"

Well, first up is ***Applegeeks***, artist **Mohammad F. Haque** and writer **Ananth Panagariya**'s long-running misadventures of four college students. Hawk, Jayce, Alice, and Gina already have their hands full trying to fit their madcap antics around schoolwork—they seem to spend more time in *trouble* than in class—but when Hawk decides to build a robot girlfriend, all bets are off! This strip charms even the hardest of geek hearts, so look for volume one in late May.

Hot on its heels is the book I'm most excited about this year: ***Sinfest***. That's right—the immensely popular strip from international man of mystery **Tatsuya Ishida is headed to print, and I can't wait. Drawing** on classic comic-strip influences yet touching on such topics as religion, advertising, sex, and politics, *Sinfest* is the best newspaper-style strip you'll never see in a newspaper—"the best webcomic out there," according to comicsworthreading.com. We're starting at the beginning with volume one in June, and catch an exclusive ***MySpace DHP*** appearance in May!

Stay tuned for further webcomics news in '09 from the Horse of Darkness. It's a brave new world out there, and we're paying attention.

See you online,

Moody

Katie Moody
Associate Editor

DARK HORSE HEROES

Artist and comics collector **Jesse Hamm** has dabbled in comics art with his graphic novel, *Good As Lily*, but he primarily works on book and magazine illustration. His collecting hobby helped DH to make our *Tarzan: The Jesse Marsh Years* archives possible with a comic-collection loan—we were extra careful!

Charles Brownstein, executive director at the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, loves comics—he's a lifer, and believes that comics have a capacity for creativity that's unmatched in other mediums . . . Which is *awesome*, since he manages pretty much everything at CBLDF, making it possible to defend free speech in comics.

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